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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 004630

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL  
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE  
THEMES:

HEADLINES  
BRIEFING  
EDITORIAL OPINION

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS

S&P Upgrades Turkey's Credit Rating - Sabah  
RTUK Permits Private Radio Broadcasts in Kurdish - Sabah  
US Repeats Request for 'extensive use' of Incirlik -  
Hurriyet  
Al-Yaver: "We Won't Allow PKK Presence in Iraq" - Hurriyet  
First Civilian Secretary General for NSC - Hurriyet  
Internal Divisions in PKK - Milliyet  
Iraq Visas to be 'Convenient' for Turkish Businessmen -  
Turkiye

OPINION MAKERS

Scattered Promises from Al-Yaver - Radikal  
Sezer Approves Alpogan's for NSC Secretary General -  
Cumhuriyet  
US Insists on wider use of Incirlik - Cumhuriyet  
US Wants to transfer 48 F-16s from Germany to Incirlik -  
Zaman  
Shiite Leader el-Sadr Accepts Pope's Mediation Offer - Yeni  
Safak  
US Continues Discussions With Turkey Over Incirlik - Yeni  
Safak  
Cyprus Expert Assigned as NSC General Secretary - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Incirlik Air-Base: All papers and TV channels report that  
Incirlik Air Base has moved to the top of the Pentagon's  
agenda with Turkey. Under the US global force posture  
review, the US has asked Turkey for the use of Incirlik as a  
'forward operating area' for military operations against a  
common threat. "Zaman" reports that a senior Pentagon  
official told reporters that discussions will continue with  
Turkey for more flexibility for the use of Incirlik air  
base. Reportedly, the US would like to transfer 48 F-16s  
from Spangdahlen air base in Germany to Incirlik. "Zaman"  
adds that a State Department official said that the US had  
given Turkey information about the restructuring plans  
without making any official proposals. "Hurriyet" quotes a  
US official in Washington as saying that 'the Turks are hard  
bargainers, and we don't expect these negotiations to be any  
different.' The official said that the US will not make any  
requests outside of Incirlik within the framework of the  
Global Force Posture Review. He emphatically denied that  
the US would request a military presence in northern Cyprus.

Intra-PKK Clash Reported in Mosul: "Milliyet" reports that  
militants from the hard-line PKK faction in northern Iraq  
attacked a house in Mosul where other PKK elements loyal to  
Osman Ocalan had been living. One of the hard-line PKK  
militants was wounded in the ensuing gunbattle and was later  
captured by Iraqi security forces.

Al-Yawar Concludes Visit to Turkey: "Zaman" reports that  
at the end of his two day visit to Turkey, Iraqi Interim  
President Al-Yawar said that agreement had been reached in  
all issues discussed. Yawar announced that Turkey will  
resume activities of its Mosul Consulate, which was closed  
in 1995. He added that talks for a second border gate  
between Turkey and Iraq will continue, and said he could not  
foresee any obstacle to the proposal. In response to a  
question on the PKK, Al-Yawar said that no terrorist  
organizations would be allowed to harm neighboring countries  
from Iraqi territory. Al-Yawar also repeated the Iraqi  
government's commitment to a unified Iraq. "Sabah" reports  
that new Iraqi visa regulations were designed to prevent  
terror attacks and sabotage, and that al-Yawar promised that  
the visa process would be made convenient for Turkish  
businessmen. Turkish Trade Minister Tuzmen predicted that  
the Iraqis would make visa issuance available to Turkish  
businessmen at border points of entry.

Civilian Appointed to Head National Security Council:  
President Sezer approved the assignment of Yigit Alpogan, currently Turkey's Ambassador in Athens, as Secretary General for the National Security Council. The assignment has been published in the official gazette and is now official. Alpogan's assignment opens a new chapter in the NSC, as he is the first civilian to serve as Secretary General.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Venezuela; US Global Defense Posture Review

"Chavez hands the US a defeat"  
Deniz Kavukcuoglu commented in the social democrat-opinion maker "Cumhuriyet" (8/18): "Hugo Chavez has long been a thorn in the side of the US because of his political position, which emphasizes national independence, economic sovereignty, a fair share of oil revenues, and the fight against poverty. The US hasn't liked him since the day he was elected, and did everything possible to topple him. The US provided enormous financial support for the opposition. In order to prepare the ground for a coup attempt against Chavez in 2002, the Bush administration had given 877,000 USD to the opposition via the National Endowment for Democracy. Yet Chavez was able to fend off every effort against him, largely because of his strong popular support. The recent referendum was another US-sponsored attempt to topple Chavez. The people of Venezuela did not allow this to happen. The result of the referendum is not only a victory for Chavez, but also a significant defeat for the US."

"The New US Global Defense Posture"  
Sami Kohen wrote in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (8/18): "It may seem that a withdrawal of American forces from abroad would reduce US security, but the main point of the recently announced changes is an expanded and more flexible military able to meet current threats. US forces will be withdrawn or downsized from certain areas, yet a 'forward base' strategy will also be implemented, and that includes Poland, Romania, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Such a change in US military strategy is quite natural, since the areas of challenge and threat have moved to the Eastern Mediterranean, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. The nature of the challenge has also changed with the rise of global terrorism. ... The most important impact of the US decision will be on the future of NATO. It remains to be seen to what extent the decision will effect the future of the Alliance. Some European military strategists have already started a debate, calling on the EU to take up defense and security initiatives where the US has left off. But the EU has never shown a willingness to take on such a responsibility alone. ... The withdrawal of US forces from 'old Europe' and the transfer of some of them to 'new Europe' is a decision important enough to create a new chapter in the strategic equilibrium. Turkey will also take its place in this structuring, with Incirlik airbase becoming even more important than before."

EDELMAN